THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) The Government permitted two American warships to visit Kochi port during June 19-21, 2003 for rest and crew liberty following extended operations by these warships in support of U.S. operations in Afghanistan.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Military sale to Pakistan by Germany

2630. PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that Germany had lifted its ban on military sales to Pakistan; and

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) There has been no formal ban by Germany on military sales to Pakistan Germany however continues to have a very restrictive approach, in accordance with its own legislation, on export of arms and dual use items/technologies to Pakistan.

Regarding civil war in African countries

†2631. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that several African countries like Liberia and Congo, etc., are engaged in a fierce civil war;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that 33 lakhs people have died in Congo alone and Liberia is still bearing the brunt;

(c) if so, whether it is also a fact that India being a leader of Non-Aligned Movement has failed to play its role in solving those problems; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Yes.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) Casualty figure is large though it is difficult to arrive at the exact figure.

(c) and (d) India has consistently supported peaceful resolution of the civil war in these countries and has supported international efforts to bring peace to these countries.

Visit of Pakistani delegation

2632. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether a recent Pakistani delegation, the largest ever business delegation, has *inter alia* urged to ease visa norms on the plea that such a policy would flourish the trade between the two countries;

(b) if so, what are their main demands;

(c) Government's reaction thereon; and

(d) whether Pakistan Government is also expected to reciprocate our gesture?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) A delegation from Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry visited India (July 7-8) at the invitation of Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI). The Joint recommendations, arrived after their meeting, *inter alia* identified easing of visa facility for businessmen of India and Pakistan, enlargement of scope of goods and services traded, and restoration of transport and communication links, as the factors for promotion of trade and commerce between the two countries.

(c) Government is committed to greater economic and trade relations between the two countries. Prime Minister had, in his statement in Parliament on May 2, emphasized on importance of economic cooperation which could create conducive atmosphere for addressing more difficult issues between the two countries.

There is no restriction on grant of visas to Pakistani nationals, including businessmen, who are found eligible, and visas are normally granted after pre-verification.